REPORT OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR
ENDED JUNE 30, 1923

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
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COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
HEADQUARTERS OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT,
Washington, July 1, 1923.

To the COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

I submit the following report of the transactions of the fire department during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1923:

During the year 2,792 alarms of fire were received, an increase of 795 over the number received during the fiscal year 1922. Of these alarms, 1,232 were box alarms and 1,560 local or telephone calls. Of the alarms received, 210 were false, an increase of 29 over the number of such alarms received during the fiscal year 1922. Twelve arrests were made by the police department for the sounding of false alarms, and four convictions were obtained.

Nineteen fires which appeared to be of a suspicious nature and three of probably incendiary origin occurred during the year. In two of the latter cases convictions were obtained and the guilty parties sentenced to the penitentiary for two and five year terms, respectively.

The total fire loss during the fiscal year is estimated at $2,074,096, covered by an insurance of $23,103,088.

The year's fire loss was an increase of $894,293 over the loss for the preceding fiscal year. Considerable more than half of the entire loss was caused by four fires, as follows: The Wilkins-Rogers Co.'s flour mill (loss, $94,286), the People's Drug Store warehouse (loss, $382,894), the Army air station at Bolling Field (loss, $750,000), and W. A. Pierce Lumber Co.'s yard (loss, $108,690).

FIRE PREVENTION.

During the year the inspection of apartment houses, hotels, schools, homes for the aged, etc., in the District of Columbia was maintained as in the past. Such structures were visited once each six days by a uniformed member of the department, resulting in the elimination of many fire hazards. This work is in addition to that performed by the force under the supervision of the fire marshal, the time of these members of the department being devoted to inspection of mercantile establishments, supervision over the storage and sale of inflammables, the enforcement of fire-prevention regulations, and abatement of fire hazards reported by other members of the department. It is highly desirable that the fire marshal's force be augmented by the assignment of additional inspectors, and this matter will be made the subject of recommendations to the commissioners at a later date.

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DISCIPLINE.

During the year the commissioners found it necessary to remove four members from the service of the department for delinquency. Less drastic disciplinary measures were administered in 100 cases.

PENSIONS.

The following pensions were granted during the year:

T. M. Robinson, superintendent of machinery, retired August 1, 1922, and granted relief in the amount of $104.16 per month.

Archibald Nelson, private, retired August 1, 1922, and granted relief in the amount of $69.16 per month.

W. W. Virts, lieutenant, retired August 31, 1922, and granted relief in the amount of $73.33 per month.

W. J. Seitz, captain, retired September 30, 1922, and granted relief in the amount of $79.16 per month.

L. Dziegielewski, private, retired November 30, 1922, and granted relief in the amount of $50 per month.

T. M. Catterton, private, retired November 30, 1922, and granted relief in the amount of $40 per month.

B. W. Reid, lieutenant, retired February 8, 1923, and granted relief in the amount of $73.33 per month.

G. D. Pickett, private, retired January 16, 1923, and granted relief in the amount of $30 per month.

C. F. Sharp, private, retired February 15, 1923, and granted relief in the amount of $69.16 per month.

C. A. Kreamer, battalion chief, retired March 20, 1923, and granted relief in the amount of $100 per month.

Mrs. Ruth Hagemann, widow of the late private M. H. Hagemann, was granted relief in the amount of $60 per month for her personal use and $10 for the use of her child, effective April 17, 1923.

Mrs. Grace A. Bradley, widow of the late private D. J. Bradley, was granted relief in the amount of $35 per month for her personal use and $10 per month for the use of her child, effective December 16, 1922.

Mrs. Julia Boyd, widow of the late private H. J. Boyd, was granted relief in the amount of $35 per month for her personal use and $10 per month for the use of her child, effective November 10, 1922.

J. H. Nolan, private, retired May 15, 1923, and granted relief in the amount of $40 per month.

Mrs. Sarah Bohlayer, widow of the late Pvt. George Bohlayer (a pensioner at the time of his death), was granted relief in the amount of $60 per month, effective April 16, 1923.

C. H. Bailey, sergeant, retired June 15, 1923, and granted relief in the amount of $70.83 per month.

On February 17, 1923, an act of Congress was approved granting increases of pension to members of the fire department retired under laws enacted prior to our present relief law, and to all widows on the pension roll. Under the provisions of this law the commissioners issued an order granting increases in pension to 52 retired officers and members of the department, and to 42 widows. I can not too highly express my appreciation of the commissioners' untiring efforts to obtain this much-needed legislation and the successful culmination of those efforts.

DEATHS.

During the year the department lost by death the following members:

Pvt. D. J. Bradley on December 16, 1922.
Pvt. S. C. Hill on January 20, 1923.
Pvt. M. H. Hagemann on March 10, 1923.
Pensioner George Bohlayer died on April 11, 1923.

HORSES.

On July 1, 1922, the department had on hand 65 horses. During that month 6 which had been purchased with funds available for the preceding year were received. During the year 2 died and 2 were condemned and transferred to other District departments, leaving at the close of the year 67 on hand.

TRAINING SCHOOL.

Efforts made by the commissioners during past years to obtain a drill tower upon which members of the department could be trained in the fighting of fire and in rescue work have, up to the present time, been unsuccessful. The department has been without such facilities since 1911, and it is my sincere hope that this need can be filled without much further delay.

MOTORIZATION.

Practically all of the reserve apparatus of the department is still horse-drawn. Much of our motor apparatus in service is badly in need of overhauling and repairs. The provision of additional motor apparatus for reserve and to replace some of the older types of motor apparatus now in service is much to be desired. It is hoped that the commissioners will be successful in obtaining sufficient funds from Congress to place the entire apparatus of the department in proper condition.

Four new pieces of apparatus were received during the year, as follows: One 1,000-gallon triple combination pumping engine and one combination chemical and hose wagon were received and placed in service in No. 2 engine house; one aerial truck received and placed in service in No. 5 truck house, and one city service truck received and placed in service in No. 12 truck house.

One Empire roadster and one Dodge touring car were received from the United States Government. These cars were in bad condition when received, but have been repaired so as to make them serviceable until more modern cars can be secured.

SALARIES.

The act providing for reclassification of salaries of Government employees which passed Congress at its last session specifically exempts members of the fire department from the benefits of its provisions. Unless action is taken looking toward an increase in the rates paid these members a $20 per month decrease in their com-

pensation will be met on July 1, 1924. Even under present conditions the commissioners have found it necessary to reduce the physical requirements of applicants in order to obtain men to fill vacancies, and if the compensation of members of the department is reduced below the present figures, a most deplorable condition will be created. It is urged that the commissioners give most earnest consideration to this matter, and that steps be taken looking toward an adjustment of fire-department salaries to a scale commensurate with the duties and labors of the service. The importance of obtaining appointees of the highest physical and mental types can not be overemphasized, and if a sufficient number of such men can not be obtained under the present wage scale, certainly conditions under a reduced wage scale will be infinitely worse and will lead to a depleted personnel and the destruction of the morale which is so necessary in our service.

ANNUAL LEAVE.

Civilian employees of the Federal and District Governments are now entitled to 30 days' annual leave with pay. The officers and members of the fire department, whose hours of duty are much longer, and whose duties are more hazardous than those of the average Government employee, are entitled to but 20 days leave with pay. I believe that these men, especially in view of the conditions surrounding their work, are entitled to 30 days' annual vacation, and recommend that steps be taken looking toward this end.

THEATER DETAILS.

The fire department at present details a uniformed member of its force at each performance (involving the use of movable scenery) given in any theater in the District of Columbia. Our present force is insufficient to extend these details to include the larger motion-picture houses. I believe that this extension should by all means be made, and recommend that sufficient additional men be obtained to permit the same.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

The estimates of the department for the fiscal year to end June 30, 1925, have been forwarded to the commissioners. It is requested that these recommendations be given the earnest consideration of the commissioners, and that efforts be made to secure the desired appropriations from Congress.

CONCLUSION.

To the commissioners I express my sincere thanks for the cooperation and assistance which they have rendered to me during the past year. To the officers and members of the fire department I express my appreciation of the loyal support which they have afforded me, and assure them that the services which they rendered have been most gratifying.

GEO. S. WATSON,
Chief Engineer.

APPENDIX I.

REPORT OF THE FIRE MARSHAL.

WASHINGTON, *July 2, 1923.*

To the CHIEF ENGINEER, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FIRE DEPARTMENT:

I submit the following report of activities of the fire marshal's office for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1923:

During the year 2,792 alarms of fire were received and investigated by this office. This is an increase of 795 as compared with the number received during the preceding year. Of these 2,792 alarms of fire 1,232 were box alarms, an increase of 242 box alarms over the number received during the preceding year; 1,560 were local alarms or telephone calls, an increase of 553 over the number received during the preceding year.

The loss caused by the 1,232 box alarms is estimated at $2,039,595, part of which was covered by insurance of $12,343,780. The loss caused by the 1,560 local alarms is estimated at $34,501, part of which was covered by insurance of $10,759,308.

The total loss for the fiscal year is estimated at $2,074,096, which is a fraction over 8.97 per cent of the total insurance of $23,103,088.

During the year 22 fires occurred for which additional alarms were received. They were as follows:

July 3, 1922, box 732 at 3.56 a. m., followed by a third at 4.01 a. m. and a fourth at 4.04 a. m., for fire in a five-story brick flour mill located at 3261 K Street NW.; estimated loss	$94,286
Oct. 8, 1922, box 417 at 4.15 a. m., followed by a second at 4.21 a. m., for fire in a two-story frame shed located at Thirteenth and Water Streets SW.; estimated loss	1,200
Oct. 23, 1922, box 124 at 11.23 a. m., followed by a second at 11.30 a. m., for fire in a three-story brick wholesale toy store located at 617 and 619 Louisiana Avenue NW.; estimated loss	30,649
Oct. 24, 1922, box 748 at 10.51 p. m., followed by a second at 10.59 p. m., for fire in one-story stone church located at Conduit and New Cut Roads NW.; estimated loss	30,000
Nov. 23, 1922, box 158 at 5.10 a. m., followed by a second at 5.16 a. m., for fire in three-story brick commission house located at 915 and 917 Louisiana Avenue NW.; estimated loss	250
Nov. 28, 1922, box 148 at 11.07 p. m., followed by a second at 11.19 p. m., for fire in two three-story and one one-story buildings, occupied as apartments and ladies' tailoring and millinery stores located at 1214, 1216, and 1220 Fourteenth Street NW.; estimated loss	9,300
Dec. 1, 1922, box 174 at 7.58 a. m., followed by a second at 8.01 a. m., and a third at 8.10 a. m., for fire in a three-story brick plumbers' supply house located at 215 Thirteenth Street NW.; estimated loss	59,000
Dec. 7, 1922, box 1221 at 3.09 a. m., followed by a second at 3.12 a. m., for fire in a seven-story brick apartment house and lunch room located at 900 and 906 New York Avenue NW.; estimated loss	500
Jan. 15, 1923, box 633 at 7.38 p. m., followed by a second at 7.46 p. m., and a third at 8.06 p. m., for fire in a three-story brick apartment house located at 201, 203, and 205 D Street NE.; estimated loss	47,700
Feb. 7, 1923, box 834 at 7.20 p. m., followed by a second at 731 p. m., for fire in a three-story brick university dormitory located at Sixth and Howard Streets NW.; estimated loss	4,261
Feb. 15, 1923, box 617 at 6.40 p. m., followed by a second at 6.45 p. m., a third at 6.47 p. m., and a fourth at 7.22 p. m., for fire in a two-story brick drug warehouse located at 1412 and 1414 First Street NE.; and 60 to 70 Decatur Street NE.; estimated loss	382,894

Feb. 18, 1923, box 163 at 3.08 a. m., followed by a second at 3.16 a. m., for fire in two-story brick bowling alleys and pool room located at 1321 H Street NW.; estimated loss $3,000

Feb. 20, 1923, box 657 at 6.55 p. m., followed by a second at 6.59 p. m., a third at 7 p. m., and a fourth at 7.08 p. m., for fire in a three-story brick storage house located at 114 to 122 K Street NE.; estimated loss 16,586

Mar. 11, 1923, box 161 at 1.20 a. m., followed by a second at 1.29 a. m. and a third at 1.33 a. m., for fire in a six-story brick office building located at 1419 F Street NW.; estimated loss 30,000

Mar. 21, 1923, box 523 at 2.21 a. m., followed by a second at 2.43 a. m., for fire in three-story brick apartment house and a two-story frame dwelling located at 745 and 747 Tenth Street SE.; estimated loss 5,350

Mar. 31, 1923, box 936 at 10.33 a. m., followed by a second at 10.44 a. m., for fire in airplane hangar and frame photograph building located at Bolling Field, Anacostia, D. C.; estimated loss 750,000

Apr. 8, 1923, box 519 at 1.57 p. m., followed by a second at 2.03 p. m. and a third at 2.26 p. m., for fire in one-story brick office building and two-story frame lumber sheds located at 600 South Capitol Street SE.; estimated loss 70,000

Apr. 17, 1923, box 166 at 9.07 p. m., followed by a second at 9.16 p. m. and a third at 9.34 p. m., for fire in three-story brick clothing store, three-story brick cigar store, and three-story brick club located at 1011, 1013, and 1015 Pennsylvania Avenue NW.; estimated loss 66,400

Apr. 22, 1923, box 6173 at 1.37 a. m., followed by a second at 1.44 a. m. and a fourth at 1.46 a. m., for fire in a lumber yard located on Rhode Island Avenue NE. between Sixth Street and the railroad tracks; estimated loss 108,690

May 29, 1923, box 169 at 7.52 p. m., followed by a second at 8 p m., for fire in three-story brick and four-story brick millinery stores located at 714 and 716 Seventh Street NW.; estimated loss 6,000

June 8, 1923, box 724 at 5.12 a. m., followed by a second at 5.19 a. m., a third at 5.24 a. m., and a fourth at 5.34 a. m., for fire in a three-story brick feed store located at 3342 M Street NW.; estimated loss 17,000

June 15, 1923, box 128 at 7.50 p. m., followed by a third at 7.54 p. m., for fire in a four-story brick meat market located at 628 Pennsylvania Avenue NW.; estimated loss 3,000

Loss for fires for which additional alarms were sounded 1,736,066

It will be noted that each of the 22 foregoing fires for which additional alarms were sounded, except 6, involved a loss in excess of $5,000. In addition to these fires 9 other fires occurred in the District of Columbia during the year, involving a loss each of more than $5,000, for which only single alarms were sounded. They were as follows:

Aug. 30, 1922, box 978 at 9.53 p. m., for fire in an electric freight car on the W., B. & A. Railway at Forty-eighth Street and Dean Avenue NE.; estimated loss $10,000

Sept. 25, 1922, box 642 at 9.53 p. m., for fire in a one-story brick laundry located in the rear of 915 and 917 Twelfth Street NW.; estimated loss 7,600

Jan. 12, 1922, box 185 at 8.37 p. m., for fire in four-story brick fur store and apartment house located at 618 Twelfth Street NW.; estimated loss 7,838

Jan. 28, 1923, box 616 at 3.36 a. m., for fire in three-story brick notion store and apartments located at 1216 H Street NW.; estimated loss 6,700

Feb. 8, 1923, box 784 at 11.18 a. m., for fire in a two-story frame bungalow located at 4753 Reservoir Street NW.; estimated loss 8,500

Mar. 5, 1923, box 647 at 8.01 a. m., fire in seven-story brick paper and book warehouse and office building located on H Street between North Capitol and First Streets NW.; estimated loss 16,500

Apr. 2, 1923, box 8164 at 5.26 a. m., for fire in a one-story brick garage located at 1323 Buchannon Street NW.; estimated loss 8,300

Apr. 24, 1923, box 183 at 6.23 p. m., fire in four-story brick ladies' clothing and fur store located at 1200 G Street NW.; estimated loss 9,000

May 14, 1923, box 357 at 7.33 p. m., fire in three-story brick dairy products establishment located at Nos. 1114, 1116, 1118, 1120, and 1122 Connecticut Avenue NW.; estimated loss	$25,200
Total loss for these 9 single alarms	99,638

The foregoing 22 fires, for which additional alarms were sounded, and the 9 fires for which single alarms were sounded with a loss in excess of $5,000 each, caused a total loss of $1,835,704, which leaves a loss of $238,392 for the remaining 2,761 alarms of fire.

The District of Columbia fire department was called upon on two other occasions to fight fires in which the losses exceeded $5,000, but as both of these fires occurred outside of the District of Columbia they are not included in the District losses. They were as follows:

Mar. 31, 1923, No. 12 and No. 18 engine companies on local at 10.05 a. m., for fire in three-story frame hotel and one-story frame store located at Chesapeake Beach, Md.; estimated loss	$95,000
Oct. 24, 1923, No. 1 fire boat on local at 7.32 p. m., for fire in a wooden ship at Alexandria, Va.; estimated loss	25,000

FIRE LOSS.

The loss for the fiscal year when compared with the loss for the preceding year shows an increase of $894,293. More than one-half—in fact, nearly two-thirds—of the entire loss was caused by four fires, as cited below, the details of which are hereinbefore stated in the list of fires exceeding losses of $5,000:

Wilkins-Rogers Co.'s flour mill located at 3261 K Street NW., involving a loss of $94,286.

People's Drug Stores warehouse located at 1412 and 1414 First Street NE., and 60 to 70 Decatur Street NE., involving a loss of $382,894.

Bolling Field Army Air Station, loss $750,000.

W. A Pierce Lumber Co.'s lumber yard located on Rhode Island Avenue between Sixth Street and the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad tracks, involving a loss of $108,690.

During the year the fire department responded to 68 fires at near-by points in Maryland and Virginia and rendered all possible aid in extinguishing them and preventing their spread. In a number of these cases there was no estimate made by this department of the amount of damage. In the cases, however, on which the damage was estimated it amounted in the aggregate to $145,825.

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF FIRE.

Ashes (hot) placed in wooden containers or against combustible material	29
Automobiles—back-firing, electric wires short-circuiting, gasoline igniting	230
Brush, grass, leaves, and trash burning	547
Chimneys, defective, soot in, smoke from	279
Fats, meats, grease, and foodstuff burning on stoves	45
Matches, careless use of, children playing with, rats and mice causing matches to light	343
Smoking, careless	198
Smoke pipes, stoves, furnaces, and heating plants	140
Sparks from bonfires, chimneys, furnaces, stoves	148

FALSE ALARMS.

During the year 210 false alarms of fire were received, an increase of 29 as compared with the preceding year. Members of the fire marshal's office and the police department made a thorough investigation of each case, but sufficient information could be obtained to cause only 12 arrests. A United States marine was arrested for turning in a false alarm and fined by the court $60, a colored man was fined $50, and two white boys were reprimanded by the court and warned against further mischievous practices. In the remaining cases the parties were found not guilty and released.

INCENDIARY AND SUSPICIOUS FIRES.

During the year there were 19 fires which appeared to be of a suspicious nature and 3 of incendiary origin. In 2 of these latter cases the guilty parties were apprehended. A colored man confessed his guilt and was sentenced to the penitentiary to serve two years for having set fire to a university building, and in the other case a colored man was sentenced to the penitentiary for five years for setting fire to a residence, which was entirely destroyed. In the remaining case the guilty party was not apprehended.

FOURTH OF JULY FIRES.

Despite the prohibition placed on the sale and use of explosives in connection with Fourth of July celebrations, six fires occurred which were caused by fireworks during the Fourth of July celebration, 1922. The loss, however, was much less than in former years, amounting to only $470.

INFLAMMABLE OILS, AMMUNITION, AND EXPLOSIVES.

During the fiscal year 1,062 applications to handle kerosene were received and acted upon by this office.

There were installed and put into operation 209 oil-burning heaters, making a total of 340 plants of this character now in the District of Columbia, which shows an appreciable increase over the previous year of the use of oil-burning heating equipment. Before permits were issued for the installation of these plants, careful inspections were made by members of this office to see that the regulations governing same could and would be complied with.

Two hundred and thirty-two installations of gasoline tanks were made in the District of Columbia during the fiscal year. As in the case of the oil-burning plants, careful inspections were made to see that the regulations governing the installation of these tanks could be complied with before permits to install them were issued. Up to the end of the fiscal year there were in the District of Columbia 368 public gasoline stations and 324 private gasoline service places, making a total of 742.

Fifty-four licenses were approved to handle ammunition for small arms other than cartridges for pistols, an increase of two over the previous year.

INSPECTIONS.

The total number of inspections made during the year by the corps of inspectors connected with the fire marshal's office was 46,240; of this number there were 2,067 complaints. Seven thousand and ninety-seven notices were served to remedy conditions creating fire hazards, and it was found necessary to take only a small percentage of these cases to court, showing that the public generally have been cooperating with this office.

During the period of the Social Conference, May 18 to 23, inclusive, and that of the Shrine Convention, June 3 to 7, inclusive, the fire marshal's staff were called upon to perform numerous details which not only kept them out of their districts, but necessitated their being on duty in connection with same until late at night as well as during the day.

In addition to the above inspections, 113,191 inspections were made of apartment houses, hotels, asylums, private and public schools, etc., by firemen connected with the different fire stations.

MOTION-PICTURE THEATERS AND OTHER THEATERS.

All motion-picture theaters and open-air motion-picture parks in the District of Columbia were inspected to see that all fire appliances were in proper working order prior to issuance of annual licenses. Each motion-picture theater and each open-air motion-picture park, in addition to the foregoing inspections, was inspected by members of the fire marshal's office at least once each week while the theater or park was open to the public. All told there were 58 motion-picture theaters and motion-picture parks in operation during the year. In addition to these there were in operation 11 so-called "legitimate theaters."

A uniformed member of the fire department was detailed for duty at each performance held in the "legitimate theaters." All scenery arriving in the District of Columbia for use in any of them was tested as to fireproof qualities, and if found not to stand the test the managers were required to treat it with a fireproof solution or else remove it from the theater before giving a performance.

In many halls and places of public assembly where entertainments were held one or more uniformed firemen were in attendance during such entertainments, and it was seen by members of this office that all scenery and decorations of a combustible nature used in connection with these gatherings were treated with a fireproof solution.

MOTION-PICTURE MACHINE OPERATORS.

All applicants for permits to operate motion-picture machines in the District of Columbia are required to submit a written examination, which is taken in the office of the fire marshal and gone over and rated by a member of the electrical engineer's office of the District of Columbia.

MOTION-PICTURE FILM EXCHANGES.

All motion-picture film exchange buildings in the District of Columbia, except one, are now in compliance with the regulations governing the handling and storage of motion-picture film, and in the case of the one exception referred to there are only some comparatively minor improvements to be accomplished. The material with which this work is to be done has been at the exchange building for some weeks, awaiting return of the owner of the building, who is out of the city, and who proposes to bring back with him at an early date a man specially qualified in the work to be done, to complete same.

All of these exchange buildings are of fireproof construction, equipped with automatic sprinkler systems, fire gongs connected to same, and Siamese for fire department connections. All rooms where films are handled are equipped with fireproof self-closing doors and sufficient as well as advantageous exits.

The film exchanges occupying these buildings are provided with fireproof vaults of the regulation size, properly ventilated, and equipped with double automatic self-closing doors. These vaults also contain metal racks where the reels of film are stored in separate metal containers.

An inspector of the fire marshal's office makes a test once each month of the sprinkler systems in these film exchanges, and at least three times each week he makes a thorough inspection of all the exchanges, including the several Government motion-picture laboratories and film storage rooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

As in last year's report, I recommend that the position with the title of chief inspector be created in the fire marshal's office. The number of inspections in the fire marshal's office has increased to such an extent that it requires the full time of one man to properly supervise and record the work performed by them. It is proposed to have this chief inspector take immediate charge of the inspectional force in the office of the fire marshal; to be responsible for the serving and enforcement of notices by the inspectors; to have charge of and be responsible for the keeping of inspectional reports and records; and to act, when necessary, for the deputy fire marshal and the fire marshal in their absence. The position referred to was recommended by the Congressional Joint Committee on Reclassification.

That 10 additional inspectors be provided for the fire marshal's office. While it is true that the inspection force is assisted by privates detailed from the fire department, it must be borne in mind that such details are but temporary in character and necessarily can continue only so long as conditions in the fire fighting force of the fire department may warrant. The present force is, therefore, subject at any time to reduction to such an extent as to render practically impossible a proper enforcement of the fire-prevention regulations.

CONCLUSION.

In concluding this report I wish to express my sincere thanks to the members of the fire marshal's office for their hearty cooperation given me during the past year, and also to the members of the various fire stations who assisted in the work of inspecting and reducing fire hazards.

As stated previously in this report, the fire loss during the past fiscal year is in excess of that during the preceding year, which excess is largely accounted for by the fire which occurred at the Army air station, Bolling Field, March 31, 1923. The rapid and steady growth of the city in the way of large apartment houses, office buildings, dwellings, and garages, in addition to the increased number of automobiles, has naturally increased fire hazards over the number existing during preceding years.

I extend to you my thanks for the cooperation and assistance that you have given me in the conduct and operation of the fire marshal's office.

L. V. SEIB, *Fire Marshal.*

TABLE No. 1.—*Number of alarms responded to by companies.*

	First alarm.	Second alarm.	Third alarm.	Fourth alarm.	Fifth alarm.	Sixth alarm.	Local alarm.	Time worked, engine.	Hose laid.	Hose bursted.	Ladders raised.	Fires extinguished by chemicals.		Hand pumps used.	Transfers.	Special alarms.
												Hand.	Wagon.			
Engine Company:								*H. m.*	*Feet.*	*Feet*	*Feet.*					
No. 1	215	12	1	....	....	....	89	80 00	49,000	.....	.....	59	23	7	3	....
No. 2	167	3	3	1	....	....	68	70 15	31,450	50	202	25	19	2	3	....
No. 3	194	12	2	....	....	....	40	94 00	27,750	100	138	23	16	28	4	....
No. 4	188	7	3	2	....	....	47	41 00	21,500	250	40	18	23	8	3	....
No. 5	110	....	1	....	....	....	88	115 10	37,100	100	380	35	35	23	3	1
No. 6	232	8	1	2	....	....	41	75 35	33,250	100	40	17	20	....	4	....
No. 7	301	6	6	....	....	....	68	76 00	39,800	800	344	49	61	32	6	1
No. 8	207	3	3	....	....	....	46	46 00	17,400	250	196	16	17	7	9	....
No. 9	253	2	4	2	....	....	88	53 15	32,000	.....	92	22	17	24	5	....
No. 10	160	3	1	1	....	....	53	80 00	38,100	200	220	36	21	11	3	....
No. 11	155	....	....	4	....	....	64	27 15	18,650	450	.....	16	8	4	....	....
No. 12	245	2	3	....	....	....	59	104 30	37,250	750	156	34	30	26	6	....
No. 13	113	6	1	1	....	....	22	33 00	20,150	200	.....	21	11	3	1	....
No. 14	186	4	2	2	....	....	39	57 30	24,450	.....	160	21	32	9	1	1
No. 15	69	....	....	....	....	....	34	23 15	8,050	50	40	9	4	7	5	....
No. 16	146	....	3	2	....	....	45	60 00	22,000	50	32	20	19	9	5	....
No. 17	50	....	1	....	....	....	48	38 00	13,550	150	154	5	3	2	2	....
No. 18	155	2	....	....	....	....	39	35 25	21,200	250	.....	7	2	4	2	1
No. 19	51	1	....	....	....	....	36	6 00	3,150	50	.....	2	3	5	....	....
No. 20	34	....	....	....	....	....	60	18 30	12,000	150	.....	10	4	2	1	....
No. 21	127	3	....	1	....	....	43	33 00	14,750	350	42	8	6	10	1	1
No. 22	51	....	....	....	....	....	71	11 50	10,800	50	.....	32	7	2	2	....
No. 23	146	4	3	1	....	....	48	63 30	27,600	50	92	13	16	14	3	1
No. 24	142	....	1	1	....	....	75	41 45	19,450	300	278	33	17	30	7	....
No. 25	50	....	....	....	....	....	55	15 00	6,640	150	176	7	5	2	1	....
No. 26	39	1	....	....	....	....	37	28 30	15,000	350	156	13	7	3	....	....
No. 27	34	....	....	....	....	....	44	19 30	11,500	.....	274	3	12	11	....	....
No. 28	43	1	1	1	....	....	58	19 15	8,600	100	32	17	4	6	7	1
Truck Company:																
No. 1	144	4	2	....	....	....	39	.....	.....	.....	2,459	6	....	1	6	....
No. 2	182	3	1	....	....	....	121	.....	.....	.....	2,566	25	....	12	7	1
No. 3	147	....	1	1	....	....	73	.....	.....	.....	3,586	6	....	....	....	....
No. 4	337	6	2	1	....	....	100	.....	.....	.....	5,286	24	....	6	4	....
No. 5	47	1	1	....	....	....	30	.....	.....	.....	987	7	....	7	3	....
No. 6	137	....	1	....	....	....	50	.....	.....	.....	1,226	7	....	....	4	....
No. 7	162	1	2	....	....	....	60	.....	.....	.....	1,814	6	....	3	4	....
No. 8	49	....	....	....	....	....	9	.....	.....	.....	68	....	....	....	....	....
No. 9	69	....	1	2	....	....	32	.....	.....	.....	823	....	....	....	4	....
No. 10	130	4	2	....	....	....	26	.....	.....	.....	1,565	17	....	2	7	....
No. 11	33	....	....	....	....	....	46	.....	.....	.....	499	....	....	....	....	....
No. 12	27	....	....	....	....	....	20	.....	.....	.....	247	....	....	....	....	....
Fire boat No. 1	34	....	....	....	....	....	16	39 00	5,600	1,050	.....	4	....	1	....	....
Water tower	.....	12	1	....	....	....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	....	....	....	....	....

TABLE NO. 2.—*Causes for which alarms of fire were sounded during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1923.*

	Number.
Acetylene tank catching fire while being repaired	1
Acetylene torch, careless use of	1
Air blast pipe catching fire	1
Alarms, erroneous	9
Alarms, false	210
Alarms, no fire:	
Ammonia plant, fumes escaping	6
Boiler exploding	1
Building collapsed	1
Ceiling falling	1
Cellar flooded with water	1
Child locked in room on second floor	1
Connection in sprinkler system broken	1
Gas in house from stove	2
Gas in sewer exploding	1
Gutter on roof filled with snow	2
Rescuing boys from deep hole	1
Rescuing horse from canal	1
Rescuing horse from hole in street	1
Rescuing horse from railway trestle	1
Rescuing man entangled under trolley car	1
Rescuing man from cave-in	1
Rescuing man pinned under elevator	1
Rescuing man from top of tower	1
Rescuing people from flood	3
Sailboat jammed against bridge	1
Scow sinking	1
Steamboat stuck on piles	1
Steam in house from boiler	7
Steam escaping from tank on roof	3
Steam escaping from hot-water heater	1
Steam escaping from pressing machine	1
Steam in house from radiator	2
Street obstructed by fallen tree	1
Sun showing through tar paper on roof mistaken for fire	1
Alcohol igniting while toy engine was being filled	1
Ashes (hot) put in wooden containers or against combustible material	29
Automobiles:	
Back-firing	72
Burning carbon out	1
Carburetor leaking	12
Collision, tank exploding	1
Electric wires short-circuiting	122
Exhaust pipe overheated	1
Filling gasoline tank, engine running	1
Friction from emergency brakes	2
Gasoline dropping on hot exhaust pipe	17
Gasoline dropping on hot muffler	1
Gasoline fumes igniting from lighted lantern and lighted matches	19
Gasoline igniting while cleaning motor	4
Gasoline igniting from spark	1
Gasoline in crank case exploding	1
Gasoline pipe line leaking	6
Gasoline tank exploded	1
Gasoline tank leaking	2
Grease dropping on hot exhaust pipe	2
Heating manifold pipe with lighted cotton waste	1
Insulation burning off generator	1
Paper dropping on hot muffler	1
Pilot light defective	1
Rags dropping on hot exhaust pipe	1
Belt on machine slipped off and ignited from motor	1
Blow pipe on plumber's furnace breaking, gasoline igniting	1
Boiler (high pressure) igniting floor	2
Bonfire igniting clothing on woman	1
Brick kiln overheated	1
Brush, grass, leaves, and trash burning	547
Camphorated oil igniting while being heated over gas jet	1
Candles (sulphur), careless use of	2
Candles (wax), careless use of	6
Celluloid shade placed on electric-light bulb	1
Censer left burning on rug, igniting church	1
Chaff in coffee roaster igniting	1
Chaff from coffee roaster falling down chimney, igniting fireboard	1
Children playing with fire	24
Chimneys, defective, soot in, smoke from	279
Clothes boiled dry on stoves	1
Clothes dryer overheated, igniting clothes	1
Coals, hot, dropping on combustible material	3
Electric battery short-circuiting	1
Electric curling iron put away while hot	1
Electric flatiron, current left on	4
Electric flatiron put away while hot	1
Electric heater igniting clothes on man	1
Electric lamp cord defective	1
Electric light mistaken for fire	1
Electric motor defective	1
Electric motor, insulation burning off	1
Electric railway (toy) short-circuiting	2
Electric wires defective	4
Electric wires in fan short-circuiting	1
Electric wires, insulation burning off	3
Electric wires short-circuiting	39
Electric wires short-circuiting on electric light pole	2
Electric wires short-circuiting in lamp-post	1
Electric wires short-circuiting on street cars	13
Fats, meats, grease, and foodstuffs burning on stoves	45
Flames from cupola	1
Floor joists extending into chimney igniting	1
Flues, defective	3
Film catching in sprocket wheel motion-picture machine	2
Film and trash burning in furnace	1
Firecrackers thrown in combustible material	6
Fire on concrete slab, heating slab and igniting joists	1
Fireplace overheated, igniting woodwork	6
Friction of coin in pocket of clothing being cleaned, igniting clothing	1
Friction of metal in clothing going through laundry machine, igniting clothing	1
Friction in washing machine, igniting clothes soaked with gasoline	1
Fumigating chicken coop	1
Furnace (oil burning) clogged up	3
Furnace, defective	1
Furnace igniting combustible material too close to same	8
Furnace (oil burning), oil overflowing and igniting	1
Furnace (oil burning) overflow pipe filled with carbon	1
Furnace, overheated	1
Furnace, sparks from	1
Furnace (oil burning) too close to combustible material	1
Furnace pipe overheated	3
Gas burner under coffee urn flaring up	1
Gas hose disconnected, gas igniting	3
Gas jet broken and flaming	1
Gas jet tip falling out, flame igniting floor	1
Gas jets too close to combustible material	17
Gas leaking and igniting	2
Gas left burning in peanut machine	1
Gas meter leaking, hunting for leak with lighted match	1
Gas oven overheated, igniting kitchen	1
Gas stoves and ranges too close to combustible material	5
Gasoline blow torch leaking and catching fire	1
Gasoline, careless use of	6
Gasoline fumes igniting	1
Gasoline torch ignited push cart	1
Gaspipe in lamp-post leaking and igniting	1
Goods dropped from shelf on gas mantle	1
Grass and brush burning, igniting stable	3

TABLE No. 2.—*Causes for which alarms of fire were sounded during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1923*—Continued.

	Number.
Grease adhering to smokehouse igniting	2
Grease stack igniting from range	3
Greasy rags on hot-air register igniting	1
Hose on acetylene torch breaking and igniting	1
Hot-water heater too close to combustible material	1
Iron (gas) igniting lace curtains	1
Kerosene oil, careless use of	1
Lamp (kerosene) defective, upset, exploded, too close to combustible material	29
Lantern fell off nail, igniting shed	1
Lantern, upset	1
Lightning, struck by	5
Lime slaking, igniting boards	1
Mangle, overheated	1
Matches:	
Careless use of	267
Cat overturned can on box of matches, igniting matches	1
Children playing with	62
Coat pocket containing matches, squeezed between door and jam, matches igniting	1
Rats causing matches to light	14
Michievous fires	5
Motor short-circuiting	1
Paper burning, thrown into trash	1
Poker, hot, hung on wood partition, igniting same	1
Poker, hot, put in trash	1
Pumpkin lantern igniting curtains	3
Rags deposited under floor by rats and ignited from heat pipes	1
Register, hot air, igniting floor joists	1
Rekindling of old fire	10
Responded on local to fire for which box was pulled	1
Salamanders, careless use of	2
Sewer gas igniting in manhole	1
Shelf broke, precipitating canned goods into matches, igniting matches	1
Smoke from chimneys, furnaces, incinerators, stoves, salamanders, trash burning	86
Smoking, careless	198
Smoke pipe, covered with paper, defective, too close to partitions, roofs, or joists, soot in, overheated	42
Soft coal against furnace, igniting	1
Sparks from bonfires, chimneys, furnaces, incinerators, locomotives, stacks, stoves	148
Spontaneous combustion	17
Static electricity igniting fumes of gasoline	1
Sterno can overturned, igniting table	1
Stove (coal), combustible material too close, heat from igniting motion-picture film, hot coals on floor, overheated, upset	27
Stoves (gas) defective, overheated, too close to combustible material, hose disconnected	27
Stoves (kerosene) catching fire, defective, mash boiling over, overheated, smoking, upset	44
Stovepipe holes, rags or paper in	3
Suspicious fires	19
Tar pot boiling over, overheated	5
Thawing frozen water pipes	5
Tinner's furnace left burning	1
Trash burning in fireplace	1
Two boxes pulled for same fire	1
Unknown origin	4
Valve on gas radiator dropped off and floor ignited	1
Water heater overheated, igniting floor	1
Wireless pole on chimney, igniting from chimney	1
	2,724
Fires outside of District of Columbia	68
	2,792